

Additional Information

Tips For Observing and Photographing Dragonflies

Dragonflies can be loosely lumped into categories of “perchers” or “flyers”. Perchers, such as some of the skimmers, have a usual or favorite perch which they return to repeatedly. Some flyers have a usual route, a beat which they fly back and forth in the same area. You can pre-focus your camera or binoculars on that area to get a close look. Some have a large, long beat and are more difficult to predict, so some luck and persistence are required to find them perched. Most odonates are most active in middle of the day, but some are more active early and late, roosting most of the day in the shade. Be prepared, research and study your subjects first to know the preferred habitats. Binoculars, especially close-focus binoculars are a great aid for observing all nature subjects.

Approach slowly, getting closer and snapping away as you go (with today’s digital cameras, you can always delete later), a good distant shot is better than none and will be of some aid in identifying later.

Try to align planes of focus; for example, a side view is usually good, so move to the side for a clear side view of the dragonfly. A “3/4 view” can show face and eyes as well as the side. Some field marks are more important than others in differentiating one species from another. Get more than one angle if possible.

Sun at your back is always good for photographic detail but be ready to use flash to “fill” in the detail on the shadow side if the subject is back-lit or in any dark situation.

About ATBI

This brochure was compiled and developed by the All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) group. ATBI is an on-going project in Tennessee State Parks and State Natural Areas. The goal of ATBI is to document all species in Tennessee State Parks, monitor long-term trends in specific taxonomic groups, and promote education about and preservation of all biodiversity with increased science and citizen education efforts. To access the ATBI database, go to www.tn.gov/environment/parks/atbi.

For more information about ATBI, please contact David Hill, 7th Floor, L & C Tower, 401 Church St., Nashville, TN 37243. Email david.r.hill@tn.gov. Phone 615-253-2455.

Dragonfly References

Beaton, Giff. 2007. Dragonflies and Damselflies of Georgia and the Southeast. A Wormsloe Foundation Nature Book.

Dunkle, Sidney. 2000. Dragonflies through Binoculars: A Field Guide to Dragonflies of North America. Oxford University Press.

Nikula, Blair et al. 2002. Stokes Beginner's Guide to Dragonflies. Little, Brown & Company.

<http://www.odonatacentral.org/>. Dragonfly Society of the Americas. This site has checklists of dragonflies by county.

Collecting of plants or animals in state parks and natural areas is prohibited. Please help preserve Tennessee's natural heritage by leaving plants and animals for others to enjoy.

HENRY HORTON STATE PARK

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Phone: (931) 364-7724
www.tn.gov/environment/parks/HenryHorton/

TENNESSEE STATE PARKS
DIVISION OF RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT



All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI)

Dragonflies and Damselflies of Henry Horton State Park and Marshall County



Photo © Richard Connors

Welcome to the wonderful world of dragonflies at beautiful Henry Horton State Park! Of the approximate 154 species of odonates (dragonflies and damselflies) in Tennessee, 45 have been documented in this park or Marshall County.

Above is a picture of a *Gomphus sandrius*, the Tennessee Clubtail which occurs in only five counties in the Central Basin area of Middle Tennessee. It has been found in this park.

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Dragonfly and Damselfly Checklist of Henry Horton State Park and Marshall County

Broad-winged Damselflies ***(Calopterygidae)***

- Appalachian Jewelwing
- American Rubyspot
- Smoky Rubyspot

Pond Damselflies (Coenagrionidae)

- Blue-fronted Dancer
- Blue-ringed Dancer
- Blue-tipped Dancer
- Dusky Dancer
- Powdered Dancer
- Double-striped Bluet
- Stream Bluet
- Turquoise bluet

Dragonflies Darners (Aeshnidae)

- Shadow Darner
- Fawn Darner

Clubtails (Gomphidae)

- Arrow Clubtail
- Ashy Clubtail
- Cobra Clubtail
- Lancet Clubtail
- Midland Clubtail
- Splendid Clubtail
- Rapids Clubtail
- Tennessee Clubtail
- Russet-tipped Clubtail
- Dragonhunter
- Rusty Snaketail

- Eastern Ringtail
- Flag-tailed Spinyleg
- Black-shouldered Spinyleg
- Handsome Clubtail

Spiketails (Cordulegastridae)

- Arrowhead Spiketail

Cruisers (Macromiidae)

- Allegheny River Cruiser
- Royal River Cruiser
- Stream Cruiser
- Swift River Cruiser

Emeralds (Corduliidae)

- Common Baskettail
- Prince Baskettail
- Stygian Shadowdragon

Skimmers (Libellulidae)

- Blue Corporal
- Blue-faced Meadowhawk
- Common Pondhawk
- Common Whitetail
- Eastern Amberwing
- Painted Skimmer
- Slaty Skimmer
- Twelve-spotted Skimmer
- Widow Skimmer

Habitat

Henry Horton lies in a geographic region of Tennessee called the Central Basin. Here, the terrain is gently rolling to flat, and is underlain by limestone. The Duck

River flows along and through the park. This river is recognized as having world-class aquatic biodiversity, so it is a great area for stream species like dragonflies and damselflies.

The park maintains plantings of native grasses, managed with prescribed burns, the latest thinking on natural habitat management.

On the golf course, golfers will often see dragonflies patrolling.

Good spots

- *Along the Duck River at the canoe take-out
- *Water willow beds in the river
- *Along the river bank at the picnic area
- *Open areas
- *Over native grass plots
- *Along edges of fields

Notes
